

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7269
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AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI
AMCONSUL TRIESTE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL ZAGREB POUCH
USMISSION USUN NY
USMISSION USNATO
USDOCOSOUTH INTAF
USCINCEUR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BELGRADE 5289

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT YO
SUBJ: EVALUATION OF 11TH LCY CONGRESS

REF: A) BELGRADE 5151, B) BELGRADE 4884, C) BELGRADE 4737
D) BELGRADE 4758, E) BELGRADE 4670

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1. SUMMARY: IT CAN BE ARGUED THAT THE 11TH LCY CONGRESS
(JUNE 20-23, 1978) WAS REMARKABLE ONLY IN WHAT LITTLE NEW
OR ARRESTING EVOLVED. AS WILL BE DISCUSSED BELOW, IT
IS CLEAR THAT NO REPLACEMENT FOR TITO AS AN INSTITUTION
WAS INSTALLED. DOLANC WAS NOT ANOINTED DAUPHIN. NOR CAN
IT BE STATED WITH CONFIDENCE THAT THE STREAMLINED PARTY

PRESIDENCY, ALTHOUGH CLEARLY INTENDED AS THE COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP MECHANISM WHEN TITO DEPARTS, WILL IN FACT BE COMPETENT TO DISCHARGE THAT ROLE WHEN THE TIME COMES. FURTHER WE CANNOT YET JOIN DOLANC IN ATTRIBUTING TO THE 11TH CONGRESS THAT HISTORIC "PROGRESSIVE" SIGNIFICANCE WHICH HE HAS SO EXUBERANTLY DESCRIBED TO THE AMBASSADOR (REF A). AND, WHILE IT WAS NO DOUBT A USEFUL EXERCISE AGAIN TO DISCUSS THE MAJOR ECONOMIC OBSTACLES FACING YUGOSLAVIA, THE PROBLEMS HAVE LONG BEEN CLEAR: LOW PRODUCTIVITY OF LABOR, DOMESTIC DEMAND INFLATION, FRAGMENTATION OF THE LOCAL MARKET. TO KNOW YOUR PROBLEMS IS ESSENTIAL, BUT IT IS NOT THE SAME AS KNOWING HOW TO SOLVE THEM.

2. WE BELIEVE HOWEVER THAT THE 11TH LCY CONGRESS HAS ITS OWN PECULAR SIGNIFICANCE, NOT FOR WHAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED IN CONCRETE TERMS BUT FOR THE SELF CONFIDENCE WITH WHICH THE LCY LEADERS CONDUCTED THEMSELVES. THERE ARE THE SAME PARTY CAPTAINS WHOSE CONFIDENCE WAS SEVERELY SHAKEN BY THE EVENTS OF 1971 AND 1972, DESCRIBED BY TITO AT THE TIME AS THE PARTY'S SEVEREST CRISIS SINCE THE WAR. THEIR EFFORTS TO IMPOSE A HEAVIER HAND IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING, ESPECIALLY AT THE 10TH CONGRESS, WERE UNIMAGINATIVE AND WHILE A CERTAIN DRAB "ORDER" WAS RESTORED, NO NOTABLE SUCCESSES WERE REGISTERED EITHER. IN CONTRAST WITH THE ATMOSPHERE IN 1974 WHEN THE 10TH CONGRESS WAS HELD, WE

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PERCEIVE IN THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE 11TH CONGRESS AND IN ITS EXECUTION A DISTINCT RELAXATION IN THE CLIMATE OF TENSION AND UNCERTAINTY, AT LEAST SO FAR AS DOMESTIC AFFAIRS ARE CONCERNED. THERE IS A FEELING THAT WORKABLE COMPROMISES CAN BE FOUND, ESPECIALLY IN THE QUESTION OF INTRA PARTY "DEMOCRATIZATION". (THERE WAS VIRTUALLY NO MENTION OF THE NATIONALITIES ISSUE.) THIS WAS MOST CLEARLY EVIDENT IN KARDELJ'S SPEECH TO THE CONGRESS (REF B), WHICH PROVIDED AN OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED ATTEMPT TO NUDGE THE PARTY IN A "PROGRESSIVE" DIRECTION.

3. THUS, IF THE 11TH CONGRESS IS REMEMBERED FOR ANYTHING, WE EXPECT IT WILL BE FOR ITS CALM AND SELF CONFIDENT ATMOSPHERICS, EVEN AS TITO'S AND KARDELJ'S STRENGTH EVIDENTLY FADES. THIS CAN ONLY BE ENCOURAGING FOR THOSE WHO WISH YUGOSLAVIA WELL. AS TITO'S ROLE DIMINISHES, THIS COUNTRY WILL DESPERATELY NEED LEADERS WHO AT LEAST THINK THEY KNOW WHERE THEY ARE GOING AND HOW TO GET THERE. END SUMMARY.

4. WHERE ARE THE NEW LEADERS? THERE IS HOWEVER A VERY IMPORTANT CAVEAT TO THE ABOVE. WE HAVE SEEN NO SIGNIFICANT

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CHANGES IN THE POLICY MAKING ESTABLISHMENT AT THE FEDERAL
LEVEL SINCE THE PURGES OF 1971 AND 1972. THOSE YEARS
SAW THE SWEEPING AWAY OF A WHOLE GENERATION OF YOUNG,
DYNAMIC AND INNOVATIVE REPUBLICAN LEADERS, IN THE SERBIAN
AND CROATIAN PARTIES AND TO A LESSER EXTENT IN SLOVENIA
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AND MACEDONIA AS WELL. THOSE PEOPLE SHOULD BY NOW HAVE SERVED THEIR APPRENTICESHIP IN THE REPUBLICS AND HAVE BEGUN TO MOVE INTO FEDERAL POSITIONS, WHERE THEIR TALENTS SURELY WOULD HAVE CARRIED THEM TO THE TOP. NONE OF SIMILAR CALIBER HAS YET EMERGED TO FILL THIS GAP. THE FACES OF THE 24 MEMBERS OF THE NEW PARTY PRESIDENCY ARE DEPRESSINGLY FAMILIAR. AMONG THEM, TO BE CERTAIN, ARE ABLE MEN IN THEIR PRIME, NOT LEAST DOLANC, MIKULIC, AND GRICKOV, BUT THE AVERAGE DOES NOT IMPRESS.

5. THUS, THE MAIN WATCHWORDS OF THE 11TH CONGRESS -- CONTINUITY, STABILITY, UNITY -- DEMONSTRATE ONLY THAT NOTHING HAS REALLY CHANGED. THE ADULATION EXPRESSED FOR TITO WAS IMMENSE -- AND WE DO NOT DISPUTE THAT IT WAS SINCERE, NOR BEGRUDGE HIM HIS DUE -- BUT IT IS UNFORTUNATELY EVIDENT THAT THE PARTY'S PRESENT LEADERS REMAIN WHOLLY DEPENDENT UPON TITO FOR THEIR STATUS. (A POSSIBLE EXCEPTION MAY BE KARDELJ, BUT HE MAY NOT EVEN OUTLIVE TITO.)

6. IS DOLANC THE CHOSEN ONE? UNDERSTANDABLY, THE ELEVATION OF STANE DOLANCE AS PRESIDENCY SECRETARY HAS ELICITED SPECULATION THAT HE IS NOW "THE" FIRST AMONG HIS PEERS. WE DO NOT AGREE. DOLANC HAS A NEW TITLE BUT WE DO NOT SEE HIS DUTIES AS MUCH ALTERED. WE DO ASSUME HE HAS INFLUENCE, AND WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF HE WIELDS HIS POSITION IN TIME TO SECURE DECISIVE ADVANTAGE. BUT ONE COULD MAKE A CASE THAT DOLANC IS NOW DANGEROUSLY EXPOSED. IN FACT, TO OVERSTATE THE CASE A BIT, ONE COULD ENTERTAIN THE NOTION OF DOLANC AS A KIND OF UTILITARIAN PLACE HOLDER, VALUABLE NOW AS AN EXECUTOR OF TITO'S (OR THE INNER KITCHEN CABINET'S) ORDERS, PRECISELY BECAUSE HE IS ACCEPTABLE TO ALL FACTIONS BUT HAS NO PERSONAL CONFIDENTIAL

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POWER BASE. AS SUCH, DOLANC COULD FALL EARLY IN A POST TITO SHAKEDOWN. ALL WE CAN REALLY SAY AT THIS MOMENT IS THAT IT IS TOO EARLY TO PREDICT JUST HOW THE POTENTIALLY BRUTAL SUCCESSION GAME WILL BE PLAYED, MUCH LESS THE FINAL SCORE.

7. FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT THE CONGRESS. THERE WAS SOME INTERESTING FOREIGN AFFAIRS FALLOUT FROM THE 11TH CONGRESS. WE LEARNED HOW DEEPLY TITO IS CONCERNED OVER THE CURRENT STATE OF DETENTE (REF C) AND HOW ACUTELY YUGOSLAVIA FEARS LEST NAM SOLIDARITY SHATTER ON CUBAN/SOVIET ADVENTURISM (REF D). WE HAVE DUTIFULLY NOTED, AS WE WERE INSTRUCTED TO DO, HOW THE TREATMENT OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION HEADED

BY KULAKOV DIFFERED FROM PREVIOUS YEARS: NO SINGLING OUT FOR SPECIAL RECOGNITION. THERE WAS THE PECULAR TRIBUTE PAID BY KARDELJ TO FILIPOVIC, A VICTIM OF STALIN'S PURGES (REF E). THE YUGOSLAVS HIT HARD ON THE MACEDONIAN MINORITY/NATIONALITY QUESTION, AT A MOMENT WHEN THE BULGARIANS FOR REASONS OF THEIR OWN WERE ALSO HEATING UP THE POLEMICS. OF COURSE, HISTORY WILL ALSO NOTE THAT IT WAS ON THE OCCASION OF THE 11TH CONGRESS THAT LCY-CPC RELATIONS WERE FORMALLY "NORMALIZED." THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN ITSELF, BUT IT WOULD HAVE OCCURRED WITH OR WITHOUT THE CONGRESS AS A FORUM. ALL THIS MUST CERTAINLY BE A REFLECTION OF TENSION IN RELATIONS BETWEEN BELGRADE AND MOSCOW, ALTHOUGH THE YUGOSLAVS DENY THIS.

8. SOME ANALYSTS OF THE CONGRESS HAVE -- ERRONEOUSLY, WE THINK -- FOCUSED UPON THE ONE SENTENCE IN TITO'S OPENING SPEECH CRITICIZING THOSE (I.E. THE US) WHO "MISUSE" THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES. OTHER OBSERVERS ON THE CONTRARY DETECT A LEANING TOWARD THE WEST IN CONGRESS TREATMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. IN OUR VIEW, WE GOT OFF RATHER LIGHTLY AT THE CONGRESS, INCLUDING ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE (GIVEN HOW EASILY IRRITATED TITO IS ON THAT SUBJECT). BUT IT WOULD BE MISTAKEN TO
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ATTRIBUTE TOO MUCH SIGNIFICANCE TO THIS; THE YUGOSLAVS ARE PREOCCUPIED THESE DAYS WITH SOVIET AND CUBAN MISCHIEF MAKING, AND THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH ROOM EVEN IN FOUR DAYS OF SPEECH MAKING FOR MENTION OF EVERYTHING THE YUGOSLAS COULD FIND TO CRITICIZE IN OTHERS.

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9. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT THE YUGOSLAVS ARE INTERESTED
THESE DAYS IN SEEKING OUT ISSUES TO CRITICIZE US ABOUT.
IT IS JUST THAT THEY WILL NOT HESITATE TO DO SO IN
THEIR "PRINCIPLED" FASHION WHEN IT SUITS THEM AGAIN.

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10. "PLURALISM" VS "DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM". WE DO FIND
IN THE CONGRESS DOCUMENTS, ESPECIALLY KARDELJ'S SPEECH,
AN INDICATION THAT THE PARTY IS CONTINUING THE SEARCH
TO RESOLVE THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN SUPPOSEDLY
"DEMOCRATIC" SELF MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUED PARTY CONTROL
THROUGH THE EXERCISE OF "DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM".
HOWEVER, DESPITE ALL THAT WAS SAID AT THE PARTY CONGRESS
ABOUT DEMOCRATIC ACTION AND INFLUENCE OF THE WORKING MAN,
IN YUGOSLAV COMMUNIST TERMS THE "WORKING PEOPLE" REMAIN
IDENTICAL WITH THE PARTY, WHICH ALONE REPRESENTS THEIR
INTERESTS. SPEAKERS AT THE CONGRESS DID NOT FAIL TO
EMPHASIZE THE CONTINUING NEED FOR GREAT PARTY INFLUENCE,
ACTIVITY, AND PRESENCE AT ALL LEVELS IN SOCIETY. KARDELJ'S
SPEECH AS WELL AS DOLANC'S REMARKS TO THE AMBASSADOR JULY 5,
DESPITE THEIR BASICALLY "LIBERAL" THRUST, ALSO PROVIDE
EVIDENCE OF CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE PARTY
WHO WOULD GLADLY CHUCK MOST IF NOT ALL LIBERAL INNOVATIONS
IN FAVOR OF THE "HARD FIST."

11. NEVERTHELESS, IN ADDITION TO THE RHETORIC ABOUT SELF MANAGEMENT, AND INTERESTING REVISION OF THE PARTY STATUTE WAS CONFIRMED AT THE CONGRESS. THIS INNOVATION INSISTS NOT ONLY UPON A PARTY MEMBER'S RIGHT TO EXPRESS A MINORITY VIEW ON ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION, BUT ALSO HIS OBLIGATION TO DO SO. ALSO, THE PARTY MEMBER NOW HAS THE RIGHT TO CONTINUE TO HOLD HIS DISSONANT VIEWS EVEN AFTER THE PARTY DECISION HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN. THIS JUST MIGHT MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN HOW "DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM" FUNCTIONS IN REAL LIFE, BUT ONLY IF THE LEADERSHIP CHOOSES TO IMPLEMENT IT. PERHAPS WHAT KARDELJ SAID IN HIS SPEECH AND DOLANC TOLD THE AMBASSADOR ABOUT FURTHER DEMOCRATIZATION ARE INDICATORS THAT THEY WILL. WE WILL SEE WHETHER THE NEW FORMULATION ON DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

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REPRESENTS A LIBERAL FOOT IN THE DOOR, OR WILL PROVE MERELY ANOTHER LIBERAL TOE UPON WHICH THE DOOR AGAIN SWINGS PAINFULLY SHUT.

12. CONCLUSION: IT SHOULD THUS COME AS NO SURPRISE IF SOME DISAPPOINTMENT TO FRIENDLY OBSERVERS THAT NONE OF YUGOSLAVIA'S OVERRIDING POLITICAL DILEMMAS WERE CONSIGNED TO HISTORY BY THE 11TH CONGRESS: THERE HAS BEEN NO RESOLUTION OF THE SUCCESSION QUESTION (NOT THAT ONE SHOULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED), NOR HAS THE PARTY YET SQUARED THE CIRCLE BETWEEN "DEMOCRATIC SELF MANAGEMENT" AND "DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM", NOR DO WE YET KNOW WHETHER ONCE TITO DEPARTS THE VARIOUS PEOPLES OF THE CONSTITUTENT REPUBLICS AND PROVINCES OF YUGOSLAVIA CAN AGREE TO CONTINUE TO LIVE IN THE SAME FEDERAL STATE. ALL WE CAN SAY IN MID-1978 IS THAT PERVADING THE ATMOSPHERE THESE POST CONGRESS DAYS IS A SENSE OF SOMETHING MORE THAN TENTATIVE CONFIDENCE THAT SOMEHOW, SOME WAY, ANSWERS ARE THERE TO BE FOUND.

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